

And so, echoing the sentiment of that most distinguished of Americans, I accept and endorse this constitution, with its faults, if it has them. As did Franklin in 1787, I consent to this constitution because I doubt if we can expect any better, and as he, I am not so sure that it is not indeed the best.

I must conclude these remarks, but before I do I would avail myself of expressing once again my deep and undying gratitude to President Eney, to Vice Presidents Clark and James, to all members of the staff, to the reporters, to the wonderful group of pages, and to all of you who have served with me as delegates to this Convention.

Finally, may I, still voicing the sentiment of the noble Franklin, express a wish that those of you here who may still have objections to this Constitution join with me in doubting a little of our infallibility and manifest our unanimity of purpose by putting our names to this instrument.

I urge you, as companions and as fellow-workers, to join with me in making an appeal to the citizens of this State to support this new constitution, in the sure knowledge that in it are the instruments to correct any flaws that may be found. We may not rest on our oars until this, the final act of our purpose, is accomplished.

And may the Omniscient Father of us all favor that which we have done here.

Thank you very much.

*(The Convention rose and applauded.)*

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Delegate James Clark, Vice-President of the Convention, and requests that he come forward to the reading desk.

Delegate James Clark.

DELEGATE J. CLARK: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, we, as a Convention, have made many decisions. However, none of these decisions was as important as the one we made on that hot July day—the decision to make H. Vernon Eney President of this Convention.

Since that day, he has given totally of his energies and abilities. His leadership has been of the finest kind—leadership by example. By his patience and perseverance, he has brought us to this memorable day in Maryland's history.

The stiffness and formality that characterized this Convention in its early days

has given way to an air of easy informality, of comradeship, and cooperation. The genius of this body has been its ability, not only to make the right decision when the chips were down, but also to accept these decisions, without bitterness, once they had been made. This spirit has permeated the document which we have produced and will, I believe, flow out to the people of Maryland and have a great deal to do with their acceptance of this Constitution.

Those who would defeat this fine document on May 14 would dwell primarily on its probable cost. This, to me, is a faulty argument. It could well be that the proper execution of the reorganization of the executive branch, as called for, would result in considerable savings for the taxpayers. The revamping of our court system, especially at the district court level, may in the long run be far less costly than the continuation of our present inadequate system.

And finally, under this constitution, the legislature will be in a stronger position than ever before to examine the budget thoroughly and effect savings for the people of Maryland.

And, now, may I wish each of you—and this worthy document—Godspeed.

*(The Convention rose and applauded.)*

THE PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Delegate William S. James, Second Vice-President of the Convention.

*(Applause.)*

DELEGATE JAMES: Mr. President, fellow delegates, assembled citizens and guests: Ideally, a constitutional convention is a gathering of citizens for the purpose of conducting a public discussion and adopting the best in constitutional thought. All participants in the calling and the conduct of this historical convention have been inspired by an idealism, which often pervades, but is overlooked in our public life. Governor Tawes, in organizing the Constitutional Convention Commission, the Commission in carrying out its duties with impartiality and purpose, the General Assembly of Maryland in creating the formalities under which the Convention was organized, the voters of Maryland by their election of a non-partisan group of delegates, and you, my fellow delegates, by the discharge of your trust with the creative statesmanship, with the leadership of our great President, H. Vernon Eney, have been animated by noble purpose. These ef-